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## THE SOCIAL PROBLEM AND THE PRESENT WAR<sup>1</sup>

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An American publicist<sup>2</sup> recently predicted that the end of our present social order would come before 1930. He points out that many of the social tendencies of the present are strikingly like those which preceded the French Revolution. He cites the mental opacity of our ruling classes as in many respects similar to the stupidity of the old French nobility when they were faced by the necessity of social readjustment in their time. The parallel between recent social unrest and that which preceded the storm of the French Revolution would probably be assented to by nearly all students of social history. Indeed, it requires no profound scientific mind to see the parallel. The blindness and ultra-conservatism of many in our privileged classes on the one hand, the fanatic radicalism and one-sidedness of many of the leaders of the non-privileged on the other, would breed trouble in any social order. Unless plasticity of mind and a sense of social obligation can be instilled into our socially fortunate classes, and broad-minded and constructive views shall dominate the leaders of our masses, western civilization is indeed brewing for the world something worse than a French Revolution.

The problem of our civilization is something more than the mere threatened overthrow of existing political and industrial institutions. This the present European war (1914) makes evident. The problem before us is not how to avoid political revolution, but rather how to avoid the decay and disintegration of civilization itself. Many writers have recently told us that our civilization is on the wane, and many things might be cited in the present European war to show that such a conclusion is no mere

<sup>1</sup> A paper read before the Sociological Society (London), November 10, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Brooks Adams, *Theory of Social Revolutions* (1912).

expression of temperamental pessimism. Indeed, the parallel between existing social conditions in the western world and those which we find in the Rome of the decadence is closer even than the parallel between our social unrest and that of pre-revolutionary France. There was no need of a Ferrero<sup>1</sup> to point this out. All who know anything at all about the inner facts of our civilization and that of decadent Rome know the disturbing resemblances. The decay in religious belief, in moral ideals, in political honor, the conflict of classes, the breakdown of social regulation and control, the demand for a strong man and a centralized government to enforce order, all of these phenomena of the present suggest the parallel with Rome. The very forces which undermined Roman civilization, viz., commercialism, individualism, materialistic standards of life, militarism, a low estimate of marriage and the family, agnosticism in religion and in ethics, seem to be the things which are now prominent, if not dominant, in western civilization.

The present war has come as a shock to those who have not studied intimately the foundations of nineteenth-century European culture; but in my opinion it is not an accident of any sort, in diplomacy or otherwise. Rather the war has merely exposed the rottenness of some of those foundations of western civilization. We have supposed that we could rear a secure social structure upon the basis of an egoistic and materialistic social philosophy. We have permitted a rebarbarization of the individual's moral standards without imagining that these would actually express themselves in the life of nations. We have thought that somehow, out of a program of self-interest, material satisfactions, and brute force followed by men and nations, a settled and harmonious order would result. Even now there are those who fail to see that the egoistic, socially negative doctrines, which got such a hold of western civilization in the nineteenth century, both in theory and in practice, are the sources of present disorder. They look for some more ultimate sources in biologic or economic necessities. But those who see clearly must perceive that while biologic and economic conditions may act as stimuli, the real roots of civilization are

<sup>1</sup> See his *Greatness and Decline of Rome*; also his *Ancient Rome and Modern America*.

always in the mental attitudes and conscious values of individuals. They will also see that some of the mental attitudes and values approved as sound by the nineteenth century have proved unsound in practice; and that the present war of nations calls for a reconstruction of our social philosophy—a rebuilding of it—on a different basis from that approved by the nineteenth century.

This may seem but a partial view of present society, and the writer is glad so to confess. But there is beyond question in western civilization at the present time a mighty conflict going on between social philosophies, between ideals of life, between the forces of social disorder and dissolution on the one hand, and of social reconstruction and progress on the other. All other conflicts are but parts of this grand conflict in our civilization. No one, perhaps, can at the present time foresee the outcome of this conflict; but all can, at least, be intelligently informed as to its existence and know something of the power of forces arrayed on either side. We are not justified in thinking that the outcome will be a matter either of chance or of fatal necessity. Nations and civilizations, so far as the historian and the sociologist can discover, do not die natural deaths; their decadence and extinction seem to be rather the result of wrong choices, of misjudgments, especially on the part of the social élite who furnish the leaders in the fields of thought and action. If then our civilization is “at the cross roads,”<sup>1</sup> as a recent English writer has well said, let no one suppose that the road which it will ultimately take is predetermined. That will be a matter to be decided by the amount of social intelligence and character which the individuals of the present and of the immediate future can show. In proportion, in other words, as we can get an intelligent insight into the existing social problem and an intelligent appreciation of the individual and social qualities needed to meet that problem, in that proportion we may hope to control the destiny of our civilization.

The old world of our forefathers has suddenly enlarged and burst its bounds within a generation. The world in which we live may justly be regarded as a new world, transformed out of the old by the working of forces yet imperfectly understood. Many

<sup>1</sup> Figgis, *Civilization at the Cross Roads*.

new problems have suddenly come upon us, owing to the increase of population, the increase of knowledge, the intermingling of races and cultures, the increasing interdependence of nations, the invention of new machines, and other new developments in industry, politics, and religion. These many problems, however, have long been seen, even by superficial students, to be interdependent. Back of our social problems, as we are gradually coming to realize, there is *the* social problem; but unfortunately we are far from agreed as yet as to what that problem is. Theorist and practical reformer alike have been too prone to see it from the little corner in which they were working. The truly broad view of the problem is scarcely to be found in the social literature of the present, unless perhaps in the pages of a few writers who apparently have no appreciable influence as yet on practical social and political leaders.

The present strife between classes and nations has obscured the real nature of the social problem in many ways, but in others it has clarified the issues involved. It has shown that the social problem cannot be defined or understood from any point of view which is merely national. War has suddenly revealed the interdependence of national groups and the common life of humanity. When any one nation claims that "action in favor of collective humanity outside of the limits of the state or nationality is impossible,"<sup>1</sup> and that its own mission is to impose its superior civilization upon as large a part of humanity as possible, the rest of the civilized world stands aghast at this frank avowal of group-egoism as a basis for practical living. It suddenly becomes evident that the unit of our sociological thinking must be humanity. We see that group-egoism, whether of a nation, class, or race, is no lovelier than individual egoism. Again, the danger of taking some single principle, like that of the biological struggle for existence, from some single aspect of life, and conceiving the human problem preponderatingly in its terms, becomes evident, when we are told that "the aspiration [to abolish war] is directly antagonistic to the great universal laws which rule all life."<sup>2</sup> We begin to see that all the factors which shape civilized human life, whether material or immaterial,

<sup>1</sup> Bernhardt, *Germany and the Next War*, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

must be taken into account in any truly broad view of the social problem.

Let us specify briefly some of the particular, narrow views of the social problem which are dangerously prevalent at the present time. To many, whose vision has been confined largely to the economic relations of classes within the nation, the modern social problem has seemed essentially the labor problem. If it is not merely the problem of the harmonious adjustment of employer and employee, it is at most the problem of finding a social order in which work and enjoyment shall be in satisfactory relationship to each other. Hence the generally prevalent view that the social problem is essentially the problem of the satisfactory production and just distribution of wealth. To find the proper methods of producing and distributing material goods would result in solving the social problem, according to these thinkers.

The pacifists, however, looking beyond the bounds of national life, and emphasizing the dangers to civilization itself of international conflicts, have suggested that the pressing social problem of the present is that of international relationships. If by treaties international federal councils and arbitration courts could be established to discuss all questions and settle all disputes between nations; if the burdens of militarism and of increasing armaments could thus be got rid of; then, they seem to think, the inherent forces of civilization, such as increasing knowledge and increasing control over external nature, could be trusted to work out the solution of all minor questions.

But the eugenists, looking beyond the bounds of the present generation, have lately insisted that the real social problem of the present is the problem of the relation of the generations to one another, more particularly the problem of the control of heredity. Starting out with an abstract biologic man, much like the abstract economic man of the early nineteenth century, they seem to think that the all-important matter is the breeding of man. To secure the perfect, or even the normal, physical man would be to solve, they think, the essential problem of humanity.

To the leaders of the feminist movement the social problem appears to be very largely "the woman problem," or at most the

problem of the relations of the sexes to one another. When opportunity is given to woman to assert herself freely, to develop her own personality fully, and to make her full contribution to the social life of mankind, then the problems of our civilization will easily be solved.

The views of pacifists, eugenists, and feminists are all to be welcomed, as tending to bring out the larger human elements in the problem. Some of us, at least, are beginning to perceive that the social problem is now what it has been in all ages, namely, *the problem of the relations of men to one another*. It is the problem of human living together, and cannot be confined to any statement in economic, eugenic, or other one-sided terms. The social problem is neither the labor problem, nor the problem of the distribution of wealth, nor the problem of the relation of population to natural resources, nor of the control of hereditary qualities, nor of the harmonious adjustment of the relations of the sexes; but it is all of these and much more. If the social problem is the problem of human living together, then it is as broad as humanity and human nature, and no mere statement of it in terms of one set of factors will suffice. Such a statement obscures the real nature of the problem, and may lead to dangerous one-sided attempts at its solution.

A word of caution is necessary here. Because the greatest possible broadmindedness is needful to view aright the social problem—the problem of human living together—it must not be thought that it is beyond the power of the human intellect or of science. On the contrary, we may boldly claim that if we will keep to the common-sense view of the world, and not be seduced by one-sided philosophies, enough knowledge of how human groups do actually live together has already been accumulated to make it possible for any well-trained mind to see deeply and truly into the problem of human living together—whether the living together concern two or three individuals or humanity as a whole. Nor must it be thought that because so many different factors are involved in our social life there is no such thing as “the social problem,” that it is only a name for many different problems. On the contrary, nothing is so real as the social problem—the problem

of living together. Every age, nation, and individual must solve it in some way, by howsoever crude a social philosophy. But to solve it aright for humanity at large—in universal terms, so to speak—requires a scientific understanding of the forces at work in human interrelations, and careful putting together in a right way of all the factors concerned. In brief, it requires a scientific sociology.

Let us, therefore, consider the nature of the unity of a social group in the light of modern sociology in order to see what the nature of the social problem of the present is upon scientific analysis.<sup>1</sup> A social group, whatever else it may be, is a mass of interactions between the individuals who compose it; but if it is to have any sort of unity, these interactions must be regulated and controlled; that is, the activities of the individual members of the group must be adjusted to one another in some more or less definite way. Otherwise, the group cannot work together as a unit nor can its actions work out to any definite end. While analogies are dangerous in science, it may be helpful to compare our social group to a machine. Now the unity of a machine is secured by the nice adjustment of its parts to one another. If this adjustment is not mechanically perfect there is friction and it will not work well, or perhaps not at all. So in the social group there must be this nice adjustment between the activities of its individual members if the group is to work well as a unity, or even at all. But the parts of the social mechanism, if we may so call it, are not bits of dead, inert physical matter, but are living, feeling, thinking individual units. The machinist has only to know the principles of physics in order to manipulate the parts of the machine as he will, to secure its harmonious working. But the social leader cannot so easily manipulate the individuals of his group. He must understand human nature in all of its phases; that is, he must know the principles of psychology instead of physics to make the social mechanism work harmoniously. He must understand all the factors, in other words, involved in that adjustment of the activities of

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed and scientific discussion of the nature of social unity, see chap. viii of the writer's *Sociology in Its Psychological Aspects* (D. Appleton & Co., 1912).



individuals to one another which is necessary in order that the group may work together as a unity.

Now the factors which are involved in the harmonious adjustment of the parts of our social machine are evidently very numerous. First of all, of course, are the external physical conditions. These must be such as to favor the normal development of human life in all ways or else the social machine will work badly or not at all. But taking favorable conditions in the external environment for granted, it is evident that many internal factors will need to be considered. First among these is the biological make-up of the individuals concerned, and the impulses or instincts which this make-up gives rise to. Unless these are such as to favor the adjustment of the activities of individuals concerned, we can scarcely expect any high degree of social unity. Heredity must be right or else our social machine will not work well. Beyond heredity, however, and equally important, is the matter of the acquired habits of the individuals of the group. Either these habits must be similar, or, if different, must be such that they can be harmoniously co-ordinated, or else again we will have little or no social unity. Mere habituation has much to do with maintaining social order; and therefore external circumstances which affect habit must be strictly controlled by a group if it is to keep its unity. But if any social unity of more than a merely animal sort is to be attained, certain purely subjective elements must also be taken into account. For in all conscious human groups it is the mental attitude of the individuals toward one another which is the final decisive factor that decides whether a group shall maintain its unity or be disrupted. There are, for example, the feelings, sentiments, beliefs, ideas, and opinions of the individuals of the group. Not only must these be similar within certain limits, but the members of the group must be more or less conscious of this similarity; that is, they must develop mutual sympathy and understanding. From mutual sympathy and understanding, moreover, arise confidence and mutual trust, which make possible still closer co-ordination between the members of a group.

All of these are necessary that the mechanism of human society may work harmoniously. And such facts show conclusively that

the unity of human groups is essentially a psychic or spiritual matter. Destroy the psychic element in it, and we would have no society. Even if the psychic element may be only a means to perfect the adjustments of life, still it is evidently the absolutely decisive factor in the social life of civilized men. And we shall see as we proceed that the psychic or spiritual elements in social life are not wholly derived from the immediate environment, but have a life-history of their own. These simple principles of social unity apply to all human groups, from the simplest to humanity, if it shall ever become organized.

But what makes civilization? The level of civilization in social development is not reached until in addition to all of the instincts, habits, feelings, and sentiments which unite men into groups we have certain socially co-ordinating, unifying ideas and ideals. For essentially civilization is the discovery, diffusion, and transmission from age to age of the knowledge, beliefs, ideas, and ideals by which men have found it possible to conquer nature and live together in well-ordered groups. It is, in large measure, the substitution of a "subjective environment" of ideas and ideals for the objective environment of material objects; and cultural evolution is possible only through the continuity of this subjective environment, that is, through the continuity of ideas and social values. *Civilization, in other words, is at bottom the creation and transmission of ideal values by which men regulate their conduct.* It is therefore, essentially a spiritual affair and cannot be measured by changes in the material environment, prone as we may be to measure it thus. While human society was from the start psychic, it is manifest that only in its higher developments does it become so dominated by the psychic that it may well be called spiritual. Likeness in the beliefs and ideals of its members becomes finally even more important than the likeness of impulse, habit, and feeling which was the original foundation of group-life.

Civilized human beings, in other words, cannot live together harmoniously without some mutually accepted scale of values by which they can measure and regulate conduct. They need not only the like-mindedness which springs from similar impulses, habits, emotions, and feelings, but also generally accepted ideas

and ideals of life, if they are to achieve any social order worthy to be called civilized. A civilized social order must rest upon certain ideal values, which, at least in a democratic society, must be accepted by a large majority of the population.

Now when we look out on western society we find absolute difference, if not hopeless conflict, between the fundamental beliefs and ideals of its members. If western civilization is at present torn with conflicts, it is because just now our world of values is topsy-turvy. Faith in the old ideals by which men have lived in the past has decayed in many classes, and no new ideals have yet been found and generally accepted upon which to build a new social order. There is scarcely an institution, from the family to the state, which is not in the crucible of fiery criticism and in apparent disintegration. Take the institution of the family for illustration. Instead of the general acceptance of permanent monogamy as the ideal of the family, which it was until very recently in western civilization, we now see this form of the family attacked on every side, and classes who advocate divorce by mutual consent, free love, polygamy, and even promiscuity. The proportion of individuals who hold to these views in western civilization is now so great that their existence can no longer be ignored, while it must be admitted that an even larger number practice these theories without being willing to admit that they hold them as their standards. Much of the present criticism of the family, in other words, is no longer constructive, but is anarchistic and absolutely destructive, and is proving so in actual practice.

Again, if we take modern literature as faithfully reflecting the inner condition of our civilization, the absolute disagreement as to ideals of life becomes even more plainly visible. A very large part of modern literature repudiates not only the traditional standards of Christian ethics, but all truly humanitarian standards whatsoever. It exalts the individual as an end and as a law unto himself, and not infrequently inculcates the gratification of natural impulses and appetites as the highest good in life. It often derides the ideals of service and of self-sacrifice for the sake of service, and even the idea of social obligation. The individual and his feelings are its supreme value. It is not simply a few minor writers

who thus flout the traditional morality of Christendom in the family and in general social relations, but some of the foremost names in literature today. The decay of our moral ideals is evident, then, from even a cursory acquaintance with modern literature.

If we take the United States as an example of one of the most developed nations in western civilization, we find that it illustrates the utmost confusion and conflict with respect to the higher values of life. Every American, of course, with the exception of a few belated idealists, is agreed as to the value of wealth, and of the comfort and power and position which wealth will bring. Practically every American is also agreed as to the value of individual liberty, the power to do as one pleases, with a minimum of social constraint. Most Americans are also probably in agreement as to the value of health, or at least they are rapidly coming to such agreement. Finally, the American people seem to be in the way of becoming convinced of the value of knowledge, and so of education, at least the education of information. But if there are other social values of moment as to which the American people are in practically unanimous agreement, the writer is at loss to mention them. They are certainly not in agreement as to the value of the family, property, government, morality, or religion. "It is useless to deny," says Professor Giddings, "that our present tendency in the United States is toward anarchy in all those fields of human interest which we have not yet brought under the iron hand of our central government"; and he might have added, "especially in the field of social ideals."

Again if we take modern Germany as an example of one of the most developed peoples in Europe, we find that in it certain tendencies of our civilization have come to a head.<sup>1</sup> We find that practical ethics has become based upon a crude evolutionary naturalism, which has eventuated in the worship of power, as in Nietzsche and von Treitschke. Speaking from personal experience, I would say that a hard materialism seems to dominate the great mass of the German people from pauper to prince. This

<sup>1</sup> The writer would emphasize "have come to a head," because of course materialism, national egoism, and Machiavellian statecraft have been in abundant evidence in practically all western nations.

materialism expresses itself in a great many socially negative doctrines—doctrines which are not favorable to increasing human solidarity. In the ruling classes there has been increasing worship of the army system, and tacit, if not open, acceptance of the beliefs that the might of the state is “the supreme right,” and that “the end justifies the means.” Hence for a long period a Machiavellian political philosophy has dominated in Germany, not only in practical politics, but to a large extent in academic circles also. A very large school of German historical and political writers have indorsed such views. It is over a generation since Gustav von Rümelin,<sup>1</sup> the renowned chancellor of the University of Tübingen, declared that the principles of Christian morality could not possibly be applied to politics, and especially not to the relations between nations. This doctrine has been constantly re-echoed, and it is no wonder that a recent German militarist writer can declare: “This law [of love] can claim no significance for the relations of one country to another, since its application to politics would lead to a conflict of duties. . . . Christian morality is personal, and in its nature cannot be political.” With such ignoring of humanity, it is not surprising, either, that the doctrines of Nietzsche, although individualistic rather than nationally egoistic, with their negation of all Christian, and of most social, virtues, have proved popular in German society.

It would be unjust, of course, to say that all Germans accept such views of life as have just been indicated, quite as much as it would be unjust to charge them with accepting free love and polygamy, because some of their writers have advocated such practices. But it is necessary to point out how far the pendulum has swung toward barbarism in a people once famed among European peoples for their social idealism and Christian piety.<sup>2</sup> But Germany only illustrates the reversion toward barbarism in western civilization generally. And this reversion toward bar-

<sup>1</sup> “Ueber das Verhältniss der Politik zur Moral” (1874) in his *Reden und Aufsätze*, I, 144-71.

<sup>2</sup> By “barbarism” I mean that state of civilization in which the chief social sanctions employed are those of brute force, and little or no social control is exercised through the higher ethical values.

barism in the ideals of life must be regarded as one of the chief causes of the present fierce struggle among European nations.

It would not be difficult to cite many instances of recrudescence of barbarism among other European peoples. Indeed, the most distressing thing about the present war is not the frightful destruction of life and property, but the barbarous hatred manifested by the contending nations toward each other—a hatred such as has scarcely been witnessed in recent European wars. In Germany, for example, admirals, generals, journalists, and even university professors and theologians seem to have vied with each other in the expression of the most bitter hatred toward England; while on the side of the allies the most eminent Belgian writer of the century, M. Maeterlinck, has said that no mercy must be shown the Germans; that “they must be destroyed as we destroy a nest of wasps.”<sup>1</sup> How world-peace is to issue from the atmosphere of envenomed hate which now enshrouds the classes, nations, and the races of the modern world is difficult for even the wisest man to see. Mr. H. G. Wells’s prophetic picture of the destruction of modern civilization seems within the measure of possible realization.

Now these statements are not made as a basis for any pessimistic conclusion. They are simply given as facts. Such facts are indications, to be sure, of grave social disorder; but such disorder may, to a certain extent, be a normal accompaniment of the profound social changes through which western civilization is now passing. To be sure, the negative social ideas which now prevail among certain classes in western nations cannot be considered an indication of social normality. On the contrary, they present real dangers; but our contention is that in passing from one type of social order to another we must expect a certain amount of confusion in regard to the ideas and ideals by which men govern their lives. It is impossible for societies to change their methods of living without some degree of confusion, just as it is impossible for individuals to make such changes without some confusion. And if the change which has to be made is a great one, there is likely to be opportunity for much conflict between different groups, whether classes or nations.

<sup>1</sup> *The Daily Mail*, September 14, 1914.

Moreover, so far as a sound social philosophy can discern, there is nothing necessary or inevitable about the hatred and conflicts of classes and nations which we are now witnessing. Lack of right ideals of social life and lack of sympathetic understanding will explain most of the conflict. Hence there is a good scientific basis for a melioristic attitude toward the present conflicts which seem to threaten to tear our civilization asunder. Whatever the issue of the present war, only able social leadership is needed to lead the nations to something higher and better than nineteenth-century civilization, possibly even to a real solidarity of humanity. If we are in hopeless conflict, it can only be because we are in hopeless conflict regarding the ideals of life, in utter disagreement concerning the fundamental principles by which men should live. Not until we can reach some unity in social doctrine on a sound, scientific basis, as Comte long ago proclaimed, can we have either stability in our civilization or unity and peace in our social life.

But if the present war is due to a lack of unity in the social philosophy underlying our civilization, if it is a contest between social systems and social ideals within that civilization, and if, moreover, such confusion and conflict is normal, especially in periods of transition, where is the danger? May we not adopt a completely optimistic attitude, and say that the best ideals and best social system are bound to win out in the present struggle? The reply is that in neither history nor sociology is there any assurance of continuous progressive social evolution. There is no assurance that when the institutions and values of a civilization are destroyed they will be replaced by better ones. On the contrary, there is always the danger that there will be a reversion to a lower type of social order and of civilization. To see this, let us recall again the nature of civilization, that it consists essentially in the propagation and conservation of ideal values. We see immediately that civilization is from its very nature a fragile affair; that it is possible for any of the great value traditions of civilized society at any moment to be destroyed, especially those which have respect to the higher institutions and relationships. And as Professor Hobhouse says, "If the tradition is broken, the race

begins again where it stood before the tradition was formed.”<sup>1</sup> It is easily possible, in other words, for civilized societies to return to barbarism, though a complete return would perhaps take centuries in the case of high civilizations, since not all civilizing traditions could be broken down at once. The decay of higher social values may, of course, go on in times of peace through the undermining of the sense of social obligation and social responsibility by materialism and individualism; and we have seen it long going on among ourselves. But in periods of international war and internal revolutions, with their bloody conflicts between peoples and classes, the process of social disintegration and of relapse toward barbarism may be indefinitely accelerated. For in such conflicts the animal instincts of man are frightfully stimulated and likely to gain control, while negative social doctrines are made the impossible foundations of social order. Where such conflicts are long continued, the social loss and damage may become irreparable.

When we say that the modern social problem is fundamentally spiritual, and due to confusion and conflict with regard to the ideals of life, and that the present war is essentially a phase of this conflict, we must not be understood to deny the presence of many non-spiritual factors in the social problem or among the causes of the war. Man’s social life, like individual character, develops about two poles—one, the material conditions of life, and the other, the psychic controls over life, which are represented by values, ideas, and ideals. No one who has investigated the social conditions of the present would deny for one instant the importance of the material conditions of life, especially of economic conditions, upon our civilization, and so upon this European war. But admitting the importance of the material conditions of life, no one has shown how these conditions can be controlled except through ideas. Unless the psychic element can exercise some control over economic conditions, for example, a melioristic attitude toward the problems of our civilization is impossible. The attack upon those problems must come in the first instance through bringing to bear upon them our ideas, ideals, and valuations. This means

<sup>1</sup> *Social Evolution and Political Theory*, p. 39.



that our ideas, ideals, and values must be so expanded that they include, and give adequate recognition to, the material conditions of life.

The present situation in western civilization, then, we repeat, calls for no pessimism, but only alertness and intelligent appreciation of real dangers and difficulties, and a genuine largeness of mind in seeing all the factors involved, on the part of social leaders. Western civilization needs a great social and spiritual awakening. Let us hope that the present war will bring it. Our whole social atmosphere must be changed. The tradition of peace and good will must be established among the nations and justice between man and man. We need a new social philosophy which will lay bare the faults in existing civilization. In any constructive program for the future we must recognize that certain rotten stones were laid in the foundations of western civilization, and that these must be removed if the whole superstructure is not to fall. As examples, we need only point to the materialism, individualism, and hyper-nationalism of the nineteenth century, which the twentieth century also is apparently starting out to take as its practical guides. These doctrines are socially negative: materialism, because at bottom it denies the reality of the spiritual or psychic elements which alone make civilization possible; individualism, because it denies the reality of the common life, upon recognition of which must rest the sense of social responsibility and obligation; hyper-nationalism, or national egoism, because it denies the common life of humanity and the unlimited obligation of nations to humanity. Yet we have been trying to build the delicate and complex structure of a humanitarian civilization upon these socially negative and destructive doctrines. So imbedded are they in the structure of our civilization that their most prominent advocates are found among our intellectual and social élite. Even sociologists, who are supposed to be trying to find the solution of the social problem, are sometimes found among their supporters. To such an extent are even scientific men the puppets of their time!

With such social doctrines it is no wonder that our civilization has evidently been breeding within itself a mass of barbarians who do not respect its higher values. These are the only enemies of

which it has need to be afraid; for western civilization is no longer threatened by external foes. If its walls are ever pulled down it will not be by the barbarians of Africa or Asia, but by the barbarians within its gates. Scarcely has civilization achieved security from attack without, when enemies within its own ranks seem about to betray and destroy it.

This, then, is the end of the whole matter, that if western civilization is not to go down through a series of hopeless conflicts between nations and classes, it must have a rebirth of humanitarian ethics; that is, "an ethic which shall teach the individual to find his self-development and his happiness in the service of others, and which will forbid any individual, class, nation, or even race from regarding itself as an end in itself apart from the rest of humanity." The general acceptance of such an ethic would have prevented the present war; and whatever the issue of the present struggle, only the frank acceptance of such humanitarianism by the leaders of future civilization can save the world from a series of endless conflicts between classes, nations, and races.